Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 4, line 27 of the specification with the following amended paragraph:

A cylindrical filter 38, preferably a metallic mesh filter, is positioned in inflator body 12, and filters particulate materials generated by the combustion of propellant charges 18 and 28. Filter 38 fills a volume of the housing 12 defined by the cross-section of filter 38 (shown in Figure 6) spanning from a point l_1 to a second point l_2. The longitudinal distance defined by the distance between l_1 and l_2 ranges from about one-fourth to one half of the total length of housing 12, or l_T. Adjustment of the length of the filter 38 therefore increases or reduces the pressure of the gas at the second end 13 and as such, may function as a filter, a gas pressure throttle, and/or a heat sink depending on design criteria. Suitable, exemplary filters are available from Wayne Wire of Kalkaska, Michigan. Filter 38 also serves as a heat sink for hot combustion gases produced during inflator activation, cooling the gases before their ejection into the associated airbelt or airbag. In a preferred embodiment, a perforated disc 30, preferably an expanded metal, is positioned adjacent filter 38, and facilitates the creation of a resident interim gas pressure in inflator body 12 during combustion of the propellant. A nozzle 36 is preferably positioned adjacent disc 30 and secured with inflator body 12 by crimping second end 13, although the nozzle 36 might be threadedly attached to inflator body 12 if desired. An O-ring 39 is preferably circumferential about a portion of nozzle 36, and thereby creates a fluid-tight seal at second end 13. In a preferred embodiment, nozzle 36 includes a substantially cylindrical projection 37 that extends past second end 13. An internally projecting ledge [[38]] is preferably positioned within nozzle 36, and preferably includes a central aperture 40, that may be covered by a conventional burst shim (not shown).